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AN ADDRESS,

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COMMEMORATIVE OF

REUBEN DIMOND MUSSEY, M. D., LL. D.,

AND

INTRODUCTORY TO THE ANNUAL SESSION

OF THE

DARTMOUTH MEDICAL COLLEGE,

✓ BY

A. B. CROSBY, A. M., M. D.,

Professor of Surgery in Dartmouth Medical College, and in the Medical Department
of the University of Vermont.

RE-PUBLISHED FROM THE TRANSACTIONS OF THE NEW HAMPSHIRE
MEDICAL SOCIETY.

MANCHESTER:

JOHN B. CLARKE, PRINTER, 155 ELM STREET.
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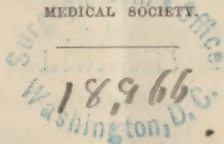
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EULOGY.

MUCH of all history trenches on the domain of biography, so that it has come to be the effort of many of our most brilliant thinkers in this century, to apply the great scientific doctrine of *Law* to the whole course of history, and to relegate to biography every partisan outburst of enthusiasm for the hero.

It is for the biographer to search through all the shadowy thoroughfares of the soul for each mainspring of thought and action, to make of one man the Atlas of a cause, or a period. To meet this discontent of history, as history had been written, Buckle and men of his stamp threw all the weight of genius and patient labor, not only to systematize all great causes, and the physical influences underlying them, but to sink into comparative insignificance the individual beside the *necessities* that called him forth. Yet is biography as old as history, and its place in literature must ever hold a mighty sway over the mind. With all the magnificent generalizations of Buckle, how touching the pathos of his confessed defeat. "Little did I know," he exclaimed, "how the horizon enlarges as well as recedes, and how vainly we grasp at the fleeting forms which melt away and elude us in the distance!"

No such weary stretch eludes the grasp of the biographer, while a thousand cooling rills of incident and anecdote start up by the wayside of his labor, and give variety and tone to his work. Plutarch says, "It does not follow because an action is great, that it therefore manifests the greatness and virtue of him who did it; but, on the contrary, sometimes a word or a casual jest portrays a man more to our knowledge of him, than a battle fought wherein ten thousand men were slain, or sacking of cities, or a course of victories."

There are idiosyncrasies of character with their tangled irregularities and physical laws, which may so modify or intensify them. Above all there are those great psychological truths that meet us on the threshold of the soul. All these contribute to make a critical, analytical study of character fascinating to the last degree. Nor is it the least of its charms the *mind* we bring to our task of commemorating a friend, or writing our summary of one whose character has become ideal in its beauty.

Perhaps the last glow has not faded from a remembered meeting, or years of genial intercourse has created a friendship for the man as well as the work of his life. Yet in the whole range of letters there is no department so sad as biography. Fascinating as it is, it deals only with the dead past, nor gives us any hold on the future, save only as we may translate the successes or failures of the dead, for our instruction and guidance beyond. The brevity of human life, the insufficiency of all ambition, the inevitable law of mortality, are principal facts impressed upon us by a contemplation of the longest and most successful life. Nevertheless affection weeps by the bier, and respect crowns even the tomb with laurel. To commemorate the virtues of the dead and perpetuate a good name and achievement is at once the grateful office of piety and affection. Yielding to this kindly instinct of our common nature, we are

here to-day to express our veneration and respect for one whose whole life was consistently given to God and humanity.

Reuben Dimond Mussey was born in the town of Pelham, Rockingham county, N. H., June 23, 1780. His father, Dr. John Mussey, was a respectable physician and an excellent man, but was not able to do much to advance his son. When Reuben was nine years old, the family removed to Amherst, up to which time he had the educational advantages of the district school. His father taught him the rudiments of Latin, and at the age of fifteen he attended the academy at Amherst and was fitted for college.

Determined to have an education, although too poor to immediately attain it, he labored on a farm in summer and taught a school during the winter. This he continued to do until, at the age of twenty-one, he entered the Junior class in Dartmouth College, in the year 1801. He continued to teach for his support while in college, and acquitted himself creditably as a scholar, being reckoned in the first third of his class.

He was graduated in August, 1803, and immediately became a pupil of Dr. Nathan Smith, the founder of the Dartmouth Medical College, a name ever to be mentioned in New Hampshire with veneration and respect. The following summer young Mussey taught an academy at Peterboro', and studied with Dr. Howe of Jaffrey.

He completed his studies with Dr. Smith, sustained a public examination, and read and defended a thesis on Dysentery. The degree of Bachelor of Medicine was conferred upon him in August, 1805, and in the September following he commenced practice in Ipswich, now Essex, Mass. Here he practiced successfully for three years, when he settled his business and went to Philadelphia, where he engaged in medical study for a period of nine months. While at Chebacco, now Ipswich, Mass., he married a Miss Sewall, who

survived the marriage only three years. He subsequently married Miss Hetty Osgood, a daughter of Dr. Osgood of Salem, who served as a surgeon in the army during the revolution. Under the instruction of Benjamin Smith Barton, he attended a full course of lectures in the University of Pennsylvania, and was graduated as a Doctor in Medicine in the year 1809. The Professors at that time were Rush, Wistar, Physic, Dorsey, Barton and Woodhouse.

Drs. Chapman and James gave the course on Obstetrics. Dr. Mussey here distinguished himself by a series of experiments tending to rebut some of the generally received physiological doctrines of the time.

On his return from Philadelphia he settled in Salem, Mass., and soon afterward formed a partnership with Dr. Daniel Oliver, subsequently a professor in the Dartmouth Medical College, a gentleman of rare grace and accomplishments.

These gentlemen gave popular courses of lectures on Chemistry, in Salem, with great acceptance. Dr. Mussey remained in this field between five and six years, and attained a large practice during the last three years, averaging, it is said, a fraction over three obstetric cases a week. He had already distinguished himself as a surgeon, and in the autumn of 1814 he was called to the chair of Theory and Practice at Dartmouth. He gave in addition a course on Chemistry, most acceptably to the students, and engaged in an extended and laborious practice.

In the troubles that sprang up between the University and the College, owing to the effort of the state legislature to wrest from the college its charter, Dr. Mussey took the side of the college.

Through the splendid efforts of Mr. Webster, Dartmouth's noblest son, the college triumphed, and in the year 1812, Dr. Mussey was appointed Professor of Anatomy and Surgery. Until the close of the session of 1838, he

held this chair, and also lectured on materia medica and obstetrics, to meet occasional exigencies in the college.

In the summer of 1818 he lectured on chemistry in the college at Middlebury, Vt. In December, 1829, Dr. Mussey left Hanover for Paris, where he remained several months. He passed several weeks in London, visited the great hospitals and museums, both there and in the provinces, and became acquainted with many distinguished men. After an absence of ten months he returned in season to give his course in 1830, by lecturing two and three times a day.

Not far from this time he was invited to fill the chair of Anatomy and Surgery at Bowdoin College, which he did for four years in succession. In 1836 and 1837, Dr. Mussey went to Fairfield, N. Y., and gave lectures on surgery at the Medical College in that place. During the year 1837 a professorship was tendered him in New York city, Cincinnati and Nashville, Tenn. He decided to accept the call to Cincinnati, and for fourteen years was the leading man in the Ohio Medical College. He then founded the Miami Medical College, labored assiduously for its good six years, and then retired from active professional life, though still retaining all his ardor and enthusiasm for his chosen profession. At the close of his professorial duties in 1858, Dr. Mussey removed to Boston, where he spent the remainder of his life, and died from the infirmities of age June 21, 1866.

He had ever been from his youth a consistent, devout Christian, and his record is without spot or blemish. Dr. Mussey's natural temperament was somewhat anxious and despondent, but fortunately his wife whom he married in 1813, Hetty Osgood of Salem, was a woman of cheerful faith and great moral worth, so that she compensated most lovingly this misfortune of his temperament. None knew so well as he how much he was indebted to her in this re-

gard, and that was the darkest day in his life when, in the month preceding his own death, this faithful companion went without him into the Dark Valley.

After Mrs. Mussey's death, her husband received a letter of condolence from a blind missionary in Cincinnati, which "strongly moved, yet deeply comforted him," and which so admirably expressed this difference and harmony between them, that I am permitted to make an extract from it. "I think," he writes, "she had rather more confidence than yourself, saw perhaps clearer the way of salvation by Christ, and was blest with a more cheerful hope. Was it not kind in the Lord Jesus to let her lead the way to the abode of the blessed? She may be the first you will recognize on the other side of the river, and her gentle hand and voice may guide you to the presence of the Holy One, and make your assurance of acceptance double. Oh! that will be a blessed meeting, and you will patiently and cheerfully wait for it!"

He had not very long to wait, for in a little more than a month after the death of Mrs. Mussey he laid down to his final rest composed and peaceful.

Such are the bare outlines of his life, but to those who knew him, his former pupils, his medical associates, his Christian friends, how meagre and barren they seem. The greater and better part is still unsaid. To say something of the cardinal points in the character of this excellent man befits the place and the occasion. The time will not admit of an exhaustive resumé of his life and character; that were the work of a biographer rather than a eulogist. But there are some of his characteristics that affection delights to dwell upon, and from a contemplation of which, we as medical men cannot fail to profit.

It was as a surgeon that Dr. Mussey came to be most extensively known, and as such let us first consider him. Both as an operative and scientific surgeon he attained a national reputation. There are two classes of surgeons —

the one sacrifices everything to the brilliancy of an operation, and when the knife has gracefully and rapidly done its work, regards the most important point of all — the after treatment — with indifference, not to say disgust. The other does his operation carefully, and with the full conviction that it is “soon enough done, when it is well enough done,” and then conscientiously strives to overrule each and every circumstance, however slight, so that all shall inure to a successful result.

Dr. Mussey belonged to this latter class. The brilliant passes and manner of the French surgeons, he regarded with contempt. He cared not to make a figure, but to benefit his patient; not to gain *ecbat*, but to save human life. He believed much in skilled surgery, something in nature, but most of all in God. So it transpired that on the eve of a great operation, he frequently knelt at the bedside, and sought skill and strength and success from the great source of all vitality. We are told that the moral effect upon the patient, and the peaceful composure that followed, were not the least of the agencies that so often rendered his surgery successful.

But he was not content blindly to accept the dictum of those who had gone before. Every principle was carefully scrutinized, and whatever he believed to be false he did not hesitate to attack, and so his name came to be associated with surgical progress. As illustrative of this point, some instances may be adduced.

In the year 1830, and before that period, Sir Astley Cooper had taught the doctrine of non-union in cases of intra capsular fracture, and it was generally accepted as an established principle at that time. Dr. Mussey carried a specimen to England which he believed showed the possibility of such union taking place. Sir Astley on first seeing it said, “This was never broken,” but on seeing a section of the same specimen remarked, “This does look a

little more like it to be sure, but I do not think the fracture was entirely within the capsular ligament." Mr. John Thompson of Edinburgh, on seeing it, declared "upon his troth and honor" that it had never been broken. This eminent surgeon, like the disputatious Massachusetts Scotchman, "always positive and sometimes right," was in this instance mistaken, as the principle advocated by Dr. Mussey is now established.

As an operative surgeon, Dr. Mussey's excellence was largely due to his skill as a mechanic. As some men are born poets, so others come into the world with that mechanical aptitude without which a fractured bone is never properly adjusted, and the knife is never neatly used. There is still a clock, in possession of his descendants, which he made with his own hands, and when he went to college he wore a pair of boots manufactured by the same skillful and and industrious fingers.

As a surgeon he was bold and fearless, ever willing to assume any legitimate responsibility, even though it took him into the undiscovered country of experiment. He did not do this rashly, but only when the stake was worthy of the risk. There is still living in Hanover a Mr. Jason Pettee, who is a living monument of Dr. Mussey's pluck and skill. This man had a large, ulcerated and bleeding navus on the vertex of his head, which threatened a speedy death. There seemed no way to relieve the patient except by tying both carotids, which was regarded as an operation inevitably fatal. The danger was imminent, and as Dr. Mussey could see no way to untie the knot, he determined to cut it. He tied one carotid, and in twelve days tied the other; following both operations in a few weeks with a removal of the tumor. The recovery was perfect, and the case was, we believe, the first recorded instance where both carotids were successfully tied. This operation gave him great *eclat* both at home and abroad.

It is not my purpose to attempt an account of the surgery done by this eminent man, only to touch on some of its salient points. Thus he successfully removed an ovarian tumor at a time when the operation had been only done a few times in the world. He removed a boy's tongue which measured eight inches in circumference, and projected five inches beyond the jaws, and the patient recovered.

He removed the scapula and a large part of the clavicle at one operation, from a patient on whom he had amputated previously at the shoulder joint. Dr. Mussey supposed that this was the first operation of the kind in the history of surgery, but in this he was mistaken. It is certainly creditable to the surgery of New Hampshire that the first three operations of this kind on record were done by New Hampshire men. The first of these was done by my father Professor D. Crosby, and the other two by the late Dr. Twitchell of Keene and Dr. Mussey.

He several times removed the upper, and portions of the lower, jaw. Dr. Mussey kept no extended records of his operations, but I subjoin a few statements alike interesting to us and creditable to him.

He performed the operation of lithotomy forty-nine times, and all the patients recovered but four. He operated for strangulated hernia forty times, and with a fatal result in only eight cases. He practiced subcutaneous deligation in forty five cases of varicocele, and all were successful. Dr. Mussey operated four times for perineal fistula, twice for impermeable stricture of the urethra, and did a large number of plastic operations with the best results. He also successfully treated a recto-vaginal fistula.

These are only a fraction of the innumerable operations which he did, yet they show results such as the greatest surgeons in the world would be proud to declare. But it was not alone as a surgeon that Dr. Mussey attained excellence. It was as an accurate observer, that he early made

himself known to the medical world. The habit of his mind was positive; he respected authority, and to the latest period of his life was assiduous in acquiring professional knowledge from books no less than from observation. He delighted to fortify himself in any given position by citing authorities, and always showed that he had informed himself exhaustively in the bibliography of the subject. Yet it was his habit to subject every medical statement to the most rigid tests.

While pursuing his studies in Philadelphia, he joined issue with Dr. Rush on some of the physiological doctrines which were generally received at that time. This distinguished man had taught the doctrine of non-absorption by the skin. This was supposed to have been proved by an experiment in which a young man, confined in a small room, breathed through a tube running through the wall into the open air, the surface of the skin being rubbed at the same time with turpentine, asparagus, &c. As no odor of these substances was perceptible in the urine, it was inferred that no absorption had taken place through the skin, and that it was impossible. Dr. Mussey, believing this doctrine to be fallacious, immersed himself in a strong solution of madder for three hours. He had the satisfaction of getting unmistakable evidence of the presence of madder in the urine for two days, the addition of an alkali always rendering this secretion red. He repeated this experiment with the same result, and made it the theme of a thesis on his graduation. Some of the Faculty who differed with Dr. Rush upon the subject were much pleased with these experiments, and predicted for our friend a distinguished career. After his graduation he carried his observations still farther. He immersed himself in a rhubarb bath, and on adding an alkali to the urine got a reddish brown color as the result. •

Another of his experiments evidently endangered his

life. He remained three hours in an infusion of nutgalls, and immediately afterwards immersed himself for the same length of time in a solution of sulphate of iron, but he could get no signs of ink in the urine. Being determined to ascertain the effect produced upon his blood, he opened a vein in his hand, but when about an ounce and a half of blood had escaped he fainted from the effect of his long immersion, and fell unconscious to the floor. He did not consider that anything was definitely settled by this experiment, but it was a fortnight before he regained his usual health.

The opponents of Dr. Mussey repeated his experiments, but did what they claimed he ought to have done, carefully closed all the outlets of the body. The result however sustained our friend's theory. His antagonists repeated these experiments, and finally announced that only a few patches such as the inside of the thighs, legs and arms could absorb. Dr. Rush himself yielded to the extent of admitting that madder and rhubarb had a very "penetrating quality," but could be absorbed only at certain points. The celebrated Dr. Chapman advocated essentially the same views. Dr. Mussey triumphantly vindicated this theory by inducing his friend Dr. Sewall to immerse first a hand then a foot, for eight or ten hours, in a solution of madder, and the urine showed its presence without a doubt. No extended account of these experiments was ever published, but they excited much attention and discussion at the time, and marked Dr. Mussey as an observing man and a good observer.

I have already remarked that Dr. Mussey was eminently positive in all his characteristics, and this was the result not less of his training, than of the Puritan blood that flowed in his veins. He did not decide what was good for himself, until he had fortified his position by scientific deduction and experience, but then he was positive that what

was good for him was good for others. As he never compromised the truth, so he never yielded to human weakness. The aphorism of Hippocrates, that "The second best remedy is better than the best, if the patient likes it best," could never have met his approval. The best with him was ever the best, and once meant always. Such men are always strong because they act from conviction, just as the well elaborated one book or one idea is a force in the world. The only danger of such a method is, that it may become Procrustean, the tall being in danger of amputation, and the short of extension.

As a young man, Dr. Mussey suffered much from dyspepsia, and headache as the result. Experimenting with his diet, he gradually gave up wine, and subsequently coffee and tea. The statements of Cuvier and Lawrence, that man is marked by nature as a vegetable eater, led him to give up animal food, and he persevered in a vegetable diet almost exclusively during the remainder of his life. He tells us that he did this because his nerves were excitable, and his hand was so unsteady in surgical operations. From 1832 to 1848, he took no animal food. During the latter year, while convalescing from a severe illness, at the urgent solicitation of his friends he took a mixed diet for a fortnight, but then abandoned meat and continued a vegetarian. In the same sickness he took brandy in doses of eight drops, which he claimed made a decided impression on him. In the latter part of his life he had what he apprehended might prove to be an epithelial cancer on his face, his father having died with that disease. After it had lasted a long time, he gave up fish, and the disease disappeared. Although not positive that this resulted from abstaining from fish, he was so impressed with the fact that he never eat it afterwards.

After he had learned by experience that this method of living agreed with him, he then, true to his instincts, set

about establishing the system on a scientific basis. He calls our attention to the fact that the orang-outang, chimpanzee and gorilla most nearly resemble man both in their organs of mastication and digestion,—that these animals are all vegetable eaters, and fall into ill health and frequently die on a mixed diet; that Adam and Eve before the fall were vegetarians, and that afterwards on a mixed diet the duration of human life constantly diminished; and finally, he adduces instances both in ancient and modern times, where vegetarians were celebrated not less for their muscular power than their mental vigor, and shows us that the extreme nervous acuteness of Caspar Hauser was only dimmed and obtused when he had learned to eat meat.

It followed of necessity that the example and teaching of Dr. Mussey on this subject led many persons in New England to adopt the system. Some of these unquestionably derived benefit from the change, but the feeble and anæmic had frequently occasion to regret it. A distinguished friend of his, after being assured that such a course would greatly improve his physical, mental and moral power, gave up animal food. It was not long, however, before a giddy head and weakened knees warned him of his mistake, and he recalled his butcher. Years afterward this gentleman was wont to say, that since that experiment he had “never attempted to transplant the rose of Sharon into his own garden.” But the doctor himself believed that he had successfully accomplished the feat.

His entire confidence in the efficacy of vegetarianism sometimes resulted in disappointment, as in the following instance related to me by a venerable physician in the valley of the Connecticut. Having occasion to visit a patient in a distant town he was stopped in a village through which he passed, and requested to visit a little child which was lying at the point of death. After examining the case he

left the house, saying, "If you will feed that child on Graham gruel it will get well." The overjoyed mother went quickly to the task of preparing this famous "pabulum vitæ," and our friend continued his journey. On his return the next day, he stopped at the door to inquire for his little patient, when the bereaved mother assured him between her sobs that "the second dose of that stuff killed it." Potential as the doctor had come to regard Graham gruel, it is needless to add that he was not quite prepared to admit that it possessed such deadly qualities.

This is neither the time nor the place to discuss the pros and cons of this system. Whatever may be said against it, the fact remains that Dr. Mussey lived a consistent vegetarian during a long, laborious, and most useful life, and finally died in the same faith at the ripe old age of eighty-six.

There was no great moral question of his time with which he did not identify himself. And it was always well known that he would invariably be found on the side of law and order, using the terms in their largest and best sense. Wherever humanity was weak and little able to take care of itself, there could Dr. Mussey always be found, advising, laboring, and if need be legislating, for the greatest good to the greatest number. During his early professional life the custom of offering wine or brandy to every caller was universal. Not to have paid this civility to the physician would, in the popular judgment, have been rude to the last degree. A limited experience, however, satisfied him that the custom was a pernicious one. He was soon convinced that for a man to be physically, mentally and morally strong, he must be his own master. Habit, he was sure, was a taskmaster with an iron hand — never content until the servant was irrevocably a slave. Acting in this, as in everything, on his convictions, he first emancipated himself, then he labored assiduously to sever the chains that bound society in this regard.

First, last and midst, he waged unceasing war on alcohol and tobacco. Believing that these agents were eminently deleterious to the human system, he sought to prevent their use. He gave to these subjects with untiring energy his pen, his voice, and his example. He adduced no end of proof to substantiate his theory, ranging the whole circle, from the demonstrations of physiology to the historical fact that "Carthage fell less by the arms of Scipio than by the wines of Capua."

One who knew Dr. Mussey long and loved him well, writes of him: "Even in his college days he abandoned, after a brief trial, the practice, then so universal as to have required all a young man's courage in its breach, of keeping ardent spirit to counteract the bad effect of water upon himself and friends. Ever since he had a wonderful power of conforming his life to his convictions, however strenuous, and, as it seems now in looking back, a more liberal growth of convictions late in life, than is usual with men of his decided and energetic type. He was ready and eager, to the latest, to receive new truths, and, if they called for action, to act upon them, even to the alteration of fixed habits." When, towards the close of his life, he was advised to take whisky and milk, he revolted strongly — adding parenthetically, "which thing I hate." And again, when talking to a member of his family he said, "I have lived so many years without alcohol that I feel entitled to die without it." So he did die, ruling his own spirit, and his mind unimpaired to the last.

The life of Dr. Mussey is especially instructive to the young members of his chosen profession, as showing how much may be accomplished by persistent application. As a young man he did not, as I judge, give signs of unusual promise. He had only the natural talents that a thousand other men would have buried in the ground. But he supplemented whatever nature had failed to do for him by an

indomitable industry. His genius was the genius of hard work, and the harvest which he garnered was the natural product of a prudent and industrious husbandry. He had none of those meretricious elements of success that enable some men to make a figure for a time, with little or no genuine ability. Dr. Mussey's personal appearance was not impressive to a stranger. Low of stature and habitually attenuated, he at first sight gave no evidence of his power. He had high cheek-bones, a small gray eye, and a broad, prominent chin. When in repose, his face rather repelled a stranger; and when he spoke there was a certain brusqueness in his manner that always dampened the ardor of a child and put an adult on his dignity. That personal magnetism—a God-like gift which some men possess, and by which they genially infect the whole social atmosphere around them—he never had. He was built on the earnest, conscientious, cast-iron model of the Puritan. Yet, notwithstanding the lack of these extraneous elements of success, he never failed to impress himself on any community where he chanced to dwell, nor to occupy the elevated position which was his due. And these results were attained by unsullied virtue and untiring labor. The late Professor Charles B. Haddock, one of the most courtly and accomplished scholars of his time, in advising young men was wont to say, “Do *well* and wait.” And this was the method of our friend. And such must be the course of every one who would win success. Seed-time and harvest will inevitably follow each other, but unless the seed be planted and the soil be industriously tilled no harvest will be reaped.

I can not close this imperfect tribute to the memory of Dr. Mussey without saying something of his character as a Christian. To omit this would be throwing out of account the most constant factor in the sum of his life. We are told that the great Morgagni, having completed a beautiful

dissection, threw his scalpel to the floor exclaiming, "Oh ! if I only *loved* God as well as I know him." When the dissecting-knife of our friend had unfolded the wondrous beauties of human anatomy, he did not pause to despair, but recognizing these evidences of a magnificent design, he bowed in humble adoration at the throne of the Great Designer. And thus throughout a long life he maintained without reproach the character of a Christian, and "died fearing God." The venerable ex-President Lord—*præclarum et venerabile nomen*—has kindly consented to give us his estimate of the Christian character of Dr. Mussey, derived from an association and friendship of many years. This distinguished gentleman writes of him as follows :

"You have asked me to give you my impressions of the venerable Dr. Mussey as a religious man. I am at a disadvantage, in this respect, because my acquaintance with him was confined to the period of our common residence in Hanover. Of the beginning of his Christian life at Salem, in the Tabernacle Church, and of its late ending in this world at Boston, I know nothing. That, indeed, is of little consequence as to one's assurance of the reality or excellence of his Christian character, as gained from a prolonged intermediate acquaintance and friendship, though important to a general sketch, and indispensable in a portraiture. We want to know the first and the last in making an estimate of the whole. Bunyan's Pilgrim is more instructive to us, and has a greater charm, as we see him laboring through his early difficulties, his burden presently rolling off into the sepulchre: and, at last, as he enters the land of Beulah, and is borne hopefully through Jordan. But a biography you do not want.

"I knew Dr. Mussey only when he was in the midst of his professional career. He was then the active citizen, the scientific student, the learned and earnest lecturer, the indefatigable practitioner, the inquisitive traveller, the friend and correspondent of learned men, at home and abroad, and, of course, overwhelmed with the cares growing out of such extended and complicate relations. But he was never more true to himself or to society in his various natural pursuits than he was faithful to his Christian calling; never more useful or honorable in his secular, than his

religious, profession. I first knew him as a delegate to represent important Christian interests in the State; and I never knew him afterwards but as a consistent and diligent promoter of the same interests at large. I never saw reason to doubt that he was a regenerate man; that he must have begun his Christian life with a profound experience, nor that his end would be peace.

"A man is perhaps best known by his social sympathies. The Doctor's most valued religious associates represented, in their day, the best type then remaining of the Christian virtue of New England. The Doctors Worcester, Emerson, Dana, Porter, Putnam, and other excellent men of that class, clerical and laical, were his chosen friends. They shared his confidence, and enjoyed his characteristic hospitality. He was never wanting to any honorable men who had claims upon his courtesy, or his charity. But his fellowship was with those only who received truth as he had received it, in the family and the church from the Bible and the Catechism, then the only *pabulum* for the children of New England. Our modern fictitious and romantic Sunday-school literature was then unknown.

"It may have been a consequence not more of natural temperament than of early training, that our excellent friend was sometimes brusque in manner, and showed a perceptible tinge of the old Puritan severity; as if he had learned more at Sinai than the Cross, and conscientiousness had grown out of proportion to affection. But that first impression has been lost upon me, when, as often, I have seen him softened and dissolved, and the quivering lip, the moistened eye, and the involuntary gush of tenderness, convinced me of the warmth and largeness of his heart. His very faithfulness to the Decalogue, stern as it was upon occasions, resolved and effective as the scalpel in his hand, served to make him, in the natural reaction, more susceptible to the gentle influence of Calvary, and more constant to the new Commandment. I have admired how he could reprove and rebuke with all authority, and then go away and weep for his erring brethren like a child. Besides, he had heavenly music in his soul. A discord, or an untimely movement fretted him. But when, as sometimes in the congregation or the social circle, a glorious harmony went up, then the strain rose from his as of impassioned viol in enlivening concert, and his chastened spirit seemed to go with it into communion with the choir above. So he was mellowing and refining all along the years, and diffusing the influence of a true Christian charity around,—a devoted member and officer of the church, a

lover of good men, a constant observer of the Sabbath, an earnest defender and propagator of the faith, a gratuitous adviser and benefactor of the poor, a proverbial terror to evil-doers, but a praise and an encouragement to those who do well.

“Dr. Mussey was positive in his Christian as in his professional character. It was always known where he could be found. He never balked a good purpose, nor disappointed a reasonable hope. He was true to his own convictions, resolved in judgment, prompt and thorough in execution. He would eat and drink, or refrain, without asking counsel of his neighbors. He was indifferent to their criticisms, but always considerate of their objections, and never acted without reasons that at least deserved their study. These he gave with great frankness, and then left others to stand or fall to their own masters. He judged no man. He was scrupulous, but not exacting; just and confident without self-righteousness; devout without hypocrisy; grave without austerity; cheerful without frivolity; conscious of sin in all things, but truthful in the righteousness of his Redeemer, and accounting it the great end of life to please and honor God. I doubt not that he was, to the last, patient and resigned under the accumulated infirmities and sufferings of his ripe old age, cheerfully resigning his attenuated and worn-out frame to the dust, hopeful of a better resurrection.

“Our venerable friend was a good man, eminently worthy of the many honors which he received on earth, and doubtless now has a greater honor in heaven. We have that assurance from Him in whom he trusted: — ‘If any man serve me, him will my Father honor; and where I am, there also shall my servant be.’”

Such is the estimate of Dr. Mussey’s character drawn by one whose own elevated Christian virtue is the matured product of a life-time. And such testimony is above all price.

Little more remains to be told; yet, after contemplating a life of such rare excellence and purity, we feel an instinctive curiosity to follow it to the end.

The life, however brilliant, that cannot stand the test of the last dread hour, is at best a miserable failure. But, tried by this standard, the last days of our friend were his

best days. And when the sunset of life drew near, it was with a sublime faith that he could chant those beautiful words of Spenser :

“ Sleep after toil, port after stormy seas,
Ease after war, death after life, doth greatly please.”

During the last two years of his life there was so much of beauty, serenity and peace in his every-day life, that I cannot refrain, in closing, from making a few extracts from the felicitous statement of a friend who was much with him at that time :

“ We dreaded for him,” says this discriminating friend, “ with his intense activity, the relinquishment of professional cares, while his physical frame demanded it ; but they were peaceful, happy years that followed, most pleasant to look back upon—the fruitage of his long life, mellowed but not decayed. Enriched by experience and brightened by leisure, they were filled with tender charities, with careful, sometimes too anxious, consideration for others,—with scientific studies, with enjoyments of literature and taste and companionship, which varied, not destroyed, his beneficent activity. In these years he completed and published a book entitled, ‘ Health : its Friends and its Foes,’ which was a great interest and occupation to him. His last publication was a little tract entitled, ‘ What shall I drink ? ’ issued in his eighty-fourth year.

“ His mind was clear and his eyesight little impaired long after his muscular powers failed. His zeal for Christ’s kingdom, his love for his friends and appreciation of their solicitous attentions, his interest in little children, his sympathy for suffering, and patient endurance of his own, all were intensified as old age advanced, or rather, as Heaven drew nearer. For Mr. Webb said truly, that to visit Dr. and Mrs. Mussey was to sit down in the land of Beulah, where they abode daily in peace and beauty, serenely

waiting. The little birds sang all around them, but across the river came celestial harmonies. Human interests were strong and sweet, but their steadfast expectation was *Beyond*.

"For two years before his death he was unable to walk, and confined the greater part of every day to his bed; but suffering gradually softened to infirmity, settling in his lower limbs, but, as he would say with a touch of professional satisfaction, 'without an inch of paralysis.' He grew ever more gentle and careful of others, and his mind wrought still on problems of science, while his feelings kept active interest in public events, in family details, and in social intercourse and correspondence.

"Most especially did the reading and re-reading of the Bible satisfy his spirit, feeding at once his largest contemplations and his daily needs. He looked forward to personal acquaintance with David and Isaiah, Abraham and Paul, with the same kind of pleasure apparently, though stronger in degree, that he would have in meeting here, in social life, poets, savans and holy men already familiar to his admiration.

"He said not much of his expected death, only referred to it as possibly near, and seemed to wish to leave with us some last words of counsel without announcing them as such. So quietly did death approach that we were unprepared for it on the day it came. So easily at last he laid his long suffering body down, and went forth new to meet his God."

And this is the brief story of another human life, full of comfort to those who loved him, full of instruction to us. Let his model be ours, from the time when he entered the arena of professional life up to the last peaceful hour, when he welcomed the grasp of that friendly Genius which "opens the gate of Fame and shuts the gate of Envy after it; which unlooses the chain of the captive, and puts the bondman's task into another man's hands."

